United Nations

Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

◆ Secretary-General recommends to Security Council that it enlarge mandate of United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador before signature of final agreements in Mexico City on 16 January, to enable it to fulfil additional responsibilities as soon as cease-fire is in effect.

◆ Secretary-General, in London for two-day visit, holds talks with British officials.

◆ Drug trafficking organizations engage in joint venture operations in South America, Western Europe and South-East Asia to smuggle heroin and cocaine, says 1991 annual report of International Narcotics Control Board.

◆ Baltic States seek aid-receiving status from United Nations Development Programme.

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With only three days left before the final signing in Mexico City of the agreements to end the 12-year conflict in El Salvador, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended to the Security Council that it enlarge the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission (ONUSAL) in that country.

In a report to the Council, dated 10 January, the Secretary-General said the signature of the agreements would give rise to additional responsibilities for ONUSAL, which would require an "immediate and substantial increase" in the Force's strength. The agreements, to be signed on 16 January in Mexico City, include verification by ONUSAL of all aspects of the cease-fire and monitoring of public order during the period while the new National Civil Police is being set up.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali stated in his report that he hoped the Council would be ready to approve of the enlargement of ONUSAL's mandate, in advance of signature, so that the Force would be in a position to fulfil its new responsibilities as soon as the cessation of the armed confrontation begins on

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1 February. He indicated that he would report further to the Council on any future changes in the situation in El Salvador which might have consequences for the ONUSAL.

The Secretary-General also said that he intended, in the coming days and weeks, to explore ways of ensuring a follow-up to the agreements on El Salvador. He noted that the goals of the agreements were not only to bring an end to the armed conflict, but also to promote respect for human rights, democracy and the reunification of the Salvadorian people.

According to a United Nations spokesman today, the negotiations between the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) had continued during the weekend and the parties had agreed to extend the deadline for the final agreement on details until midnight tonight.

In a related development, the Security Council held consultations this afternoon to discuss the Secretary-General's recommendations to enlarge the ONUSAL mandate. The Council is scheduled to convene in a formal meeting tomorrow afternoon to take action on the report.
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Continuing his first overseas trip since taking up his post, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met today in London with a number of British leaders, including Lynda Chalker, Minister for Overseas Development of the United Kingdom, for talks on various political questions, and Douglas Hogg, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, for a general discussion of international matters.

He also met with the President of Italy, Francesco Cossiga, who is currently visiting London, for a discussion of a number of questions of concern to the international community, mainly the situation in Yugoslavia.

Later today, the Secretary-General was scheduled to meet with Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd and Prime Minister John Major.

Yesterday, upon his arrival from Paris, first leg of his European visit, Mr. Boutros-Ghali met with Lord Carrington, the European Commission negotiator on Yugoslavia, to discuss the situation in that country.

Completing his visit in Paris, the Secretary-General met Saturday in Paris with the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of France, Roland Dumas, with whom he discussed a number of issues, such as the Middle East situation, the peace accords in El Salvador, the implementation of the peace accords in Cambodia, the situation in Yugoslavia and the role of the United Nations in promotion and maintenance of peace in that country and the forthcoming summit of the Security Council, to be held on 31 January in New York.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali is expected back in New York tomorrow.

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Heroin abuse is soaring in a number of regions of the world, and cocaine, once abused mainly in the Americas and Europe, now also threatens Africa, the Near and Middle East, South and South-East Asia and Oceania, reports the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB).

According to its 1991 survey, the expanding drug usage is the result of joint venture operations, established by well-financed and heavily armed interlocking criminal trafficking organizations in South America, Western Europe and South-East Asia, to smuggle heroin and cocaine.

Reiterating its call for even stronger, more comprehensive, more innovative response to the drug menace, the Narcotics Control Board stated that despite some encouraging developments and counteraction measures by countries at the community, national, regional, bilateral and multilateral levels, the drug abuse situation world-wide remained grim.

In its overall assessment of the international drug situation, the report pointed to the continued threat of illicit production, trafficking and abuse, along with drug-related violence and corruption, not only to public health but to political institutions, economic development and the environment. It also made a special reference to the spreading danger of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection as a result of intravenous drug abuse.

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The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) announced today that the Governments of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have requested aid-receiving status from the Agency.

According to a press release issued today, UNDP had sent experts to the three newly-independent States to collect information, with a view to developing UNDP's programmes there and to reviewing relevant data for establishing five-year aid targets for each country. The UNDP team had also explored the role the Agency could play in supporting the countries' transition from centralized to market-oriented economies.

The Baltic States' application for assistance will be reviewed by the UNDP Governing Council when it meets in February.

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